



WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

TO THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Health Careers

TODAY, as we enter a new decade, there are ever widening horizons before us. People everywhere have been taught that American medicine is the finest in the world. We are expected to be leaders in providing both preventive and corrective health care. Many in the health field careers contribute to that reputation, and find that they are engaging in professions of greater opportunity, challenge and rewarding satisfaction than ever before. In order to "preserve and enhance the heritage of American Medicine" our objective must be to encourage and guide the intelligent young students of today into one of the health careers where they can carry on our great traditions and contribute to solving the needs of tomorrow. These needs cannot be solved by increasing the number and size of training facilities or loan and scholarship funds, *unless the students are available.*

It is no longer true that it is difficult to enter medical school; or that only "A" students are admitted. Our medical schools are accepting one out of every two qualified applicants, and about two-thirds of the freshman students entering medical school have a "B" average. It is true that the high average student may find it easier to enter the school of his or her choice. There are many who do not have the real aptitude or desire for a medical career, and they must be informed of other exciting, stimulating and gratifying opportunities on the health team, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, medical records, medical technology, medical social work and so on. Here the physician has a golden opportunity to talk health careers to his young patients and their parents.

California is growing rapidly. It is estimated the population will increase another 10,000,000 between now and 1970. California does not now have enough nurses to meet the present demands for nursing service. The estimated need for additional hospital beds of all types is 47,972. To staff these additional hospital beds would require about 8,000 nurses. The number of graduations from Western nursing schools is not enough at present to replace the turnover. They will provide less than half the nurses needed by 1970 to maintain the present nurse-population ratio.

Informed estimates indicate that it would be possible and desirable to expand existing junior college and baccalaureate programs substantially if additional staff and facilities are made available. I have received many requests for information on the two-year program in nursing at junior

colleges, or on the Associate in Arts programs. There are twenty Associate in Arts programs in nursing in California at present.

The two-year programs in nursing which lead to an Associate in Arts degree include courses in nursing, social, biological and physical sciences, communication skills and the humanities. Nursing comprises from one-half to two-thirds of the curriculums that have been developed.

In order that the shortened program in nursing be a sound one, the nursing faculty exercises great care in selecting and organizing the clinical experience so that it will relate closely with the theory in nursing.

The curriculum is planned in accordance with college policies and the regulations of the State Board of Nurse Examiners. Students graduating from these programs are eligible for the same state examination for licensure as registered nurses as are graduates from the diploma and baccalaureate programs.

The emphasis of the two-year program is on direct patient care, and graduates fit into the over-all organization of nursing care as registered nurses, giving patient-centered care in beginning general duty nurse positions. They have knowledge and understanding of the principles of good patient care. They have been assisted in the development of attitudes and skills that are felt to be important for the graduate nurse with beginning competence and are ready to begin developing the advanced skills of an experienced practitioner.

We are all aware of the great need for bedside nurses, and the opening of the programs will provide a new source of supply for this need. Two-year programs have also been attracting students who might not otherwise consider nursing as a career. In addition to young men and women who have just completed high school, women who are married and have children who are able to care for themselves have become interested in nursing. The age range of students in some schools goes up to the fifties.

According to the evidence from the beginning collection of data, these graduates of the two-year programs are as capable as graduates of three-year or four-year programs.

Physicians' wives have demonstrated their willingness to accept the challenge of helping to provide the health workers of the future. Mrs. Leonard Offield, previous Health Careers chairman, reports that last year the Woman's Auxiliary to the California Medical Association sponsored 158 Health Careers clubs and granted 75 loans or scholarships totaling \$10,000. It has given \$72,000 since the program was inaugurated.

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